



# General Assembly Security Council

Distr.: General  
20 May 2022

Original: English

General Assembly  
Seventy-sixth session  
Agenda items 44 and 78

Security Council  
Seventy-seventh year

Question of Cyprus

Oceans and the law of the sea

## Letter dated 19 May 2022 from the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

With reference to the letters of the representative of the Greek Cypriot administration of Southern Cyprus dated 14 December 2021 ([A/76/601-S/2021/1036](#)) and 10 February 2022 ([A/76/691-S/2022/107](#)) and upon instructions from my Government, I would like to bring to your attention the following:

As outlined in my letter dated 18 November 2021 ([A/76/557-S/2021/961](#)), I am obliged to remind all interested parties that the Republic of Cyprus was established in 1960 on the basis of a partnership between the two peoples of the island, namely Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots. This partnership State ceased to exist when the Turkish Cypriots were forcibly expelled from it in 1963. Since then, each side has governed its own affairs and there has been no joint authority or administration which represents the island of Cyprus as a whole, either de jure or de facto. Therefore, Turkey maintains its position expressed in my aforementioned letter.

Regarding the settlement of the Cyprus problem, I should point to the fact that negotiations have failed for more than 50 years due to the categorical rejection of the Greek Cypriot side to share power and wealth with the Turkish Cypriot side. Three examples clearly illustrate the uncompromising attitude of the Greek Cypriot administration. Firstly, the 2004 Comprehensive Settlement of the Cyprus Issue, also known as the Annan Plan, could not be realized owing to the resounding Greek Cypriot “no” vote in the separate referendums that took place on 24 April 2004. Secondly, the Cyprus Conference that took place in Crans-Montana, Switzerland, in July 2017, failed yet again owing to the intransigent stance of the Greek Cypriot leadership. Thirdly, the Greek Cypriot side took the same obstinate position during the last informal “five plus the United Nations” meeting in April 2021 in Geneva. As was put on record during said meeting by the President of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, Ersin Tatar, the Turkish Cypriot side is ready to negotiate a cooperative relationship between the two States on the island, once the Turkish Cypriot people’s inherent rights acquired in 1960, namely sovereign equality and equal international status, are reaffirmed. Turkey strongly supports this result-oriented and realistic vision.



On the other hand, the outer limits of the Turkish continental shelf in the Eastern Mediterranean have been declared to the United Nations on numerous occasions, firstly through the Permanent Mission's note verbale No. 2004/Turkuno DT/4739, dated 2 March 2004, and lastly through my letter dated 18 March 2020 ([A/74/757](#)). Turkey will resolutely protect its ipso facto and ab initio sovereign rights over its continental shelf emanating from international law.

The Greek Cypriot administration is not in a position to claim de jure and/or de facto jurisdiction or sovereignty over the maritime areas and land territory of the island, as the Republic of Cyprus ceased to exist as a legal entity in 1963. Turkey and the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, the only legal authority representing the Turkish Cypriot people, signed a continental shelf delimitation agreement on 21 September 2011 to delimit the maritime areas to the north of the island, the geographical coordinates of which were transmitted in the annex to our letter dated 25 April 2014 ([A/68/857](#)).

Moreover, I would like to refer to my letters dated 13 November 2019 ([A/74/550](#)) and 18 November 2021 ([A/76/557-S/2021/961](#)) and reiterate that the issue of the signing of a delimitation agreement for the maritime areas to the west of the island of Cyprus can only be addressed after the comprehensive settlement of the Cyprus problem.

It is crucial to recall that the Greek Cypriots' unilateral actions and their persistent denial of Turkish Cypriots' rights are the underlying reasons for the current complexity of the Eastern Mediterranean issue and the recent tensions in the region. The first of such unilateral actions was the Greek Cypriot delimitation agreement signed in 2003 with Egypt, which violated Turkish sovereign rights in the areas falling beyond the western part of longitude 32°16'18"E, as well as Turkish Cypriots' rights. Greek Cypriots' delimitation agreements in 2007 with Lebanon and in 2010 with Israel further violated Turkish Cypriots' rights owing to the absence of consent by Turkish Cypriots to these agreements. The Greek Cypriot side went on to unilaterally draw offshore blocks, license international oil companies and conduct seismic survey and drilling activities without seeking the consent of the Turkish Cypriot side. In the face of these unilateral actions, Turkey and the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus have taken steps to safeguard their sovereign rights, in full compliance with international law.

The Greek Cypriot side is trying yet again to mislead the international community about the National Sovereign Fund they claim to have established in 2019 in order to allegedly manage any future revenues that accrue from hydrocarbon exploitation in the Eastern Mediterranean. The Fund is unrealistic, as it makes no explicit reference to equal rights of Turkish Cypriots and equitable revenue-sharing between the two sides. It contains vague concepts such as "future generations", thereby failing to provide an instant solution, while also setting out strict conditions with the specific purpose of preventing the sharing of the island's resources with the Turkish Cypriots. The structure concerned is merely a state-owned investment fund in the conventional sense, established to support the Greek Cypriot administration's state budget.

Thus, contrary to how the Greek Cypriot authorities present it, the Fund does not alleviate the concerns of the Turkish Cypriot side regarding the hydrocarbon issue. On the other hand, on 13 July 2019, the Turkish Cypriot authorities proposed to establish a cooperation mechanism to address hydrocarbon issues. This proposal foresees joint decision-making on offshore hydrocarbon activities as well as equitable revenue-sharing with respect to those activities. Such cooperation would not only help establish trust between the two sides in Cyprus, but would also bring much-needed

stability to the Eastern Mediterranean region. Turkey fully supports the proposal by the Turkish Cypriot side and expects the Greek Cypriot side to support it as well.

Turkey concurs with the Turkish Cypriot side's view, as elaborated in the annex to the letter dated 13 December 2021 (A/76/599), that the hydrocarbon issue can be solved even prior to the formal settlement of the Cyprus problem, thus serving as a catalyst to achieve a negotiated agreement in Cyprus. However, this sincere, flexible and realistic approach has not been reciprocated and the last proposal of 13 July 2019 on this issue was rejected outright by the Greek Cypriot side. In view of this situation and in the absence of a solution to the hydrocarbon issue due to the lack of goodwill on the part of the Greek Cypriot side, the exploration and drilling activities should be postponed until political settlement is achieved. If the Greek Cypriot side insists on pursuing its unilateral hydrocarbon activities, then Turkey and the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus will also continue to conduct simultaneous and reciprocal activities in order to protect our sovereign rights and interests in the Eastern Mediterranean.

Needless to say, Turkey stands ready, as always, to give its full support to ensuring a just, equitable and peaceful resolution of all pending issues, including through the equitable delimitation of maritime jurisdiction areas with all relevant coastal States that it recognizes and with which it has diplomatic relations, in accordance with international law, in order to further contribute to the stability and prosperity of the entire Mediterranean basin.

In this connection, I would like to recall that Turkey, in 2020, proposed the convening of an inclusive "Eastern Mediterranean Conference" with a view to initiating a constructive dialogue and defusing tensions in the region. Indeed, Turkey strongly believes that the main outcome of such a conference would be the establishment of a viable regional cooperation mechanism where none of the actors would be excluded. Turkey expects all relevant actors to support this proposal.

In the light of the foregoing, Turkey refutes all of the allegations contained in the referenced letters of the Greek Cypriot representative.

I would be grateful if the present letter could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 44 and 78, and of the Security Council, and published on the website of the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea, as well as in the next edition of the *Law of the Sea Bulletin*.

(Signed) Feridun H. Sinirlioğlu  
Permanent Representative